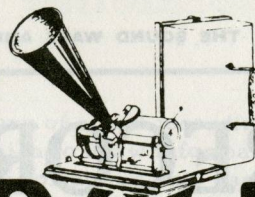
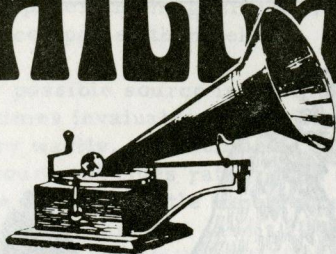


# The HILLANDALE News



APRIL 1981 No. 119

**Cheapest House in the Trade for  
Zonophone, Gramophones, etc.**  
THE ONLY HOUSE SELLING UNDER LIST PRICES.

## The Celebrated Zonophone.

Plays Disc Records.

Equal to any Machine on the Market.



STANDARD MODEL. Size of Body, 9½ by 8 by 6 ins. Size of Horn, 15 ins.

## THE Standard Model Zonophone.

As illustration. With ordinary Sound Box.

Game's price, 75/- List price, 84/-

Ditto with New Concert Sound Box, 84/-  
List price, £5 10s.

## Drawing Room Zonophone.

With Special Cabinet Glass Sides and Brass Horn, complete with new Concert Sound Box.

Price £6 List price £7

Specialty made to play the new Concert Records.

## New Concert Model, £11 11s.

List price, £12 12s.

Size of Body, 12½ by 11½ by 7½

Size of Horn 27 inches, with Special Stand.

## Zonophone Disc Records

can be used with any Disc Talking Machine.

Standard Records 7 in. diameter .. 1/9 each.

List price, 2/-

Concert Records 10 in. diameter .. 3/9 ..

List price 4/6 Postage extra.

Record Lists sent on application.

FROM GAMAGES CATALOGUE, 1902



# A RECORD EASTER

BEST I'VE  
EVER HATCHED





# Edchat

Those of us who enjoy delving into the history of sound recording or some aspect thereof have many different sources from which to draw information. Apart from existing books and articles (which the true historian can only use as a source of clues, not of facts), there are contemporary advertisements, manufacturers' catalogues, newspaper and magazine articles and even, if one is very lucky indeed, the files of the companies themselves.

Another possible source is the memory of men who worked in the industry in the past; sometimes invaluable information can be found this way, although one also has to tread very warily, for memories are often inaccurate or vague, and again this is perhaps a source of clues rather than undoubted facts. There is perhaps a tendency among those who have little experience of writing history to assume that the words of the man who was there and saw it all cannot be doubted, but this is far from being the case. Dates and details which are of vital importance to the historian years later make little impression on the mind at the time. This is why we tend to know so much more about early history than that of the recent past. Learned papers have been written on exactly when in 1877 Edison first demonstrated his phonograph, and the differences between the later Edison phonographs, for example, have been so well documented that even the most inexperienced collector can readily track down the date and position in the range of a model in his possession. But where would he find similar details of a 1950s radiogram?

These thoughts were prompted by a recent conversation with an uncle, which reminded me of a hand-written text of a talk on the history of the phonograph given by my grandfather around 1912, I think (it is filed under 'miscellaneous', of course, and I cannot instantly lay my hands on it). It shows quite clearly how much less was known within thirty years or so of the event than after a hundred years. The conversation with my uncle also demonstrated the use of memories mentioned above: for he was recalling how my grandfather, having acquired a secondhand Duophone in the early 1920s, went along to the London office of Duophone and asked their advice on improving its performance. The Manager there advised him to install a throat of solid wood at the narrow end of the horn. My grandfather duly went home and carved a solid pearwood throat for the Duophone, but my uncle could not recall that it made the slightest difference to the tone.

On another occasion, my grandfather went into a shop where they were offering a gramophone which had a glass bowl in place of the soundbox (a variation on the Pathé Diffisor idea, I suppose) and asked for it to be demonstrated. A young assistant proceeded to play this machine, with the needle pointing in the wrong direction. This incensed Grandpa, particularly as the assistant insisted that this was the correct way to play a record, and he left the shop in high dudgeon. A pity, because I have never heard of such a machine before, and perhaps if he had bought it, it might still survive chez moi!



# Correspondence

Copenhagen  
10th October 1980

Dear Sir,

May I take the liberty of trying to answer some of the questions raised in letters by George Frow and Paul Collenette about recording speeds.

For the last ten years I have been trying to chart the development of recording technique up to about 1950, combining the facts that I am both a collector and a professional historian.

Regarding electrical recordings I am now ready to state the following:

COLUMBIA started with the Western Electric technique in 1925 and replaced it with their own methods in 1928. Records made with the W.E. method are marked with a W (usually in a circle) placed somewhere inside the recorded area. The recordings made by this method in England and Denmark run at 80 rpm. Those made in France, Italy and Spain at the same time revolve at 75 rpm.

ODEON started with the W.E. technique in 1926, and replaced it with the Columbia system when merged with HMV/Columbia in 1932. Before 1932, the correct speed in all countries is 75 rpm.

PARLOPHONE has a history parallel to Odeon. They used two matrix series, one with four and one with five figures (the 2- indicated 12"). The four-figure series play at 80 rpm, the five-figure series at 75.

SCHALLPLATTE "GRAMMOPHON"/ POLYDOR / NORDISK POLYPHON used W.E. recording from 1926 to 1944, when the war stopped them. These all play at 75 rpm. The same applies to ULTRAPHON/ TEL- EFUNKEN.

CETRA used W.E. techniques and 78 rpm.

I cannot guarantee that all records are perfect at these speeds, but I think that the variations usually lie within 1 rpm.

When, some time during the next year, I have finished the paper on sound recording I am writing just now, I will gladly, if members want it (it has but little relevance to the machines many collect), write something about the questions of recording - characteristics, speeds, cutting angles and groove-width.

Thank you for an enjoyable magazine.

Yours faithfully,

Erik B. Mortensen.



1st January 1981.

Dear Christopher,

Member Denis Harbour states that thorns and fibre needles should not be used, and claims that they damage the records. He is wrong, and it is plain that he does not speak from practical experience.

He appears to be trotting out an old canard much favoured by the late Cecil Watts, a fine worker but again one who did not bother with a system which his theories suggested would be of no value. He even published some photographs of a thorn needle "before and after playing", which I have long considered simply fraudulent. This is another case where the theorist would do well to check with practical experience before airing his views. Thus are the efforts of such engineers as E. M. Ginn so lightly dismissed!

Let us examine Mr. Harbour's statements. He describes the thorn as "a miniature mop pushing along a kind of carborundum powder (dust)". In the first place, anyone who cares for his records should not be playing them in a dirty condition, whatever his pickup. In the second place, the tip of the thorn soon breaks down if it is expected to play dirt, consequently there is no enthusiast more dedicated to record cleanliness than the thorn user.

However, I am grateful to Mr. Harbour for his description 'mop', for it expresses better than he imagines what really happens. Consider a floor mop. It can pick up sharp, abrasive particles and carry them across the floor with little or no scratching! Seemingly, the debris is well enough embedded into the mop not to project. In my experience, now going back more than thirty years, the thorn can in fact be an aid in record cleaning. After washing a shellac disc, one often finds a small amount of dirt remains at the bottom of the groove. This is highly resistant to ordinary methods of cleaning, but I find that playing through with a thorn usually gets it out. One is left with a small pile of dust at the end of the side (my arm carries a brush to sweep the record as it plays), and this is not repeated at subsequent playings.

A long time ago Hi-Fi News published an article I wrote on the subject, illustrated with a photomicrograph of a 78 after 144 playings with a thorn, and no detectable wear. Members of the Yorkshire branch of this Society witnessed the 162nd. playing of the same record last summer, and will testify that it still looks and sounds immaculate. Has Mr. Harbour tried the effect of even fifty playings with his pickup? (Ref: HFN November 1964).

If any member is interested to see literally thousands of 78's in new condition, I will be pleased to hear from him. And if Mr. Harbour still has doubts as to what kind of signal I extract, then I will gladly make him a cassette or open reel transfer.

One rider. I refer to the standard shellac compounds (though including Columbia



New Process). Certain later materials, used for example by RCA after the War, are much softer and do not like thorns.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Cosens.

## London Meeting

NOVEMBER

We were pleased to welcome Arthur Ord-Hume to talk to us on this occasion about 'Music without Horns.' Mr. Ord-Hume is past-President of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain, until recently Editor of The Music Box, and author of many books on mechanical music. He came armed with books, slides and tape-recordings and also brought his own apparatus.

The talk opened with 'our' kind of music, an Edison cylinder of Wenrich's 'Silver Bell', and the line "Your voice is ringing, my silver bell" was used to introduce a mechanical carillon in Holland. This is the biggest type of musical box, the pinned cylinder being about five feet in diameter. We then heard about all sorts of mechanical music, ranging through fairground organs, dance-hall organs, Dutch street organs, church barrel organs, Orchestrelles, Pianolas, cylinder and disc musical boxes down to musical snuff-boxes. Apart from descriptions of the machines, we were given many historical facts and names of inventors and manufacturers from well-prepared notes.

The barrel-organ (not to be confused with the well-known but popularly mis-named street piano) came into prominence in the late eighteenth century and flourished for about 100 years. Mechanical instruments had been around some three hundred years before, and we heard a recording of a spinet made about 1530. One of the chief functions of these automatic instruments was to bring music to the general public.

In Germany today mechanical organs are still being made and we heard recordings of some of these. To bring us up to date a Japanese electronic 'chip' musical box was played. Other recordings we heard included a very early musical box of about 1805, and an American disc musical box. Although initially the industry had been developed in Switzerland and Germany, the Americans had made substantial contributions and their products were always worth attention. We also heard a Hupfeld Phonoliszt Violano of 1910, playing piano and three violins, all from a paper roll, and a mechanical harp. Our grateful thanks to Mr. Ord-Hume for a superbly well-prepared programme and a most interesting evening, and we hope that we may have the pleasure of his company on another occasion.



# System Költzow



## Graphophon

System Költzow 5162

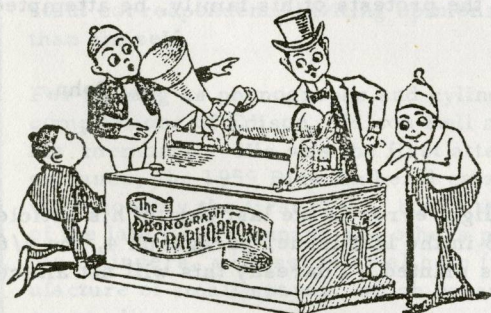
**nur 125 Mark,**

beste Sprechmaschine, übertreffend alle Phonographen.

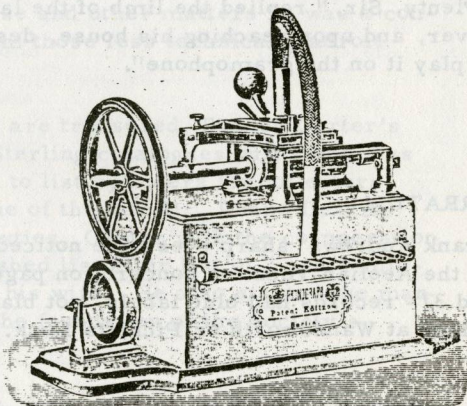
**Viel Geld** verdienen intell. Leute durch Vorstellungen mit diesen Apparaten. Preisliste sowie Abbildungen gratis aus der Phonographenfabrik Albert Költzow, Berlin S., Bärwaldstrasse 48.

The advertisement shown above was sent to us by Dr. Lotz of Bonn, who writes as follows:

I recently came across the enclosed advertisement for a GRAPHOPHON machine, "System Költzow", which somehow seemed familiar. A little digging brought to light the late 1895 advertisement (shown below) for a Type N 'Bijou' Graphophone marketed by the Chicago Talking Machine Co. The two machines depicted are entirely different, so I assume the "System Költzow" claim is correct despite the use of the word GRAPHOPHON. (The Költzow Grapho-



THE CHICAGO TALKING MACHINE CO.,





phone advertisement comes from Der Artist for July 1896).

The Költzow name also rang a bell in the Editorial mind, and if readers will refer to Hillandale for August 1879, they will find inside the front cover pictures of two very different Költzow machines, similar to that shown on the bottom right of the previous page except that they both had a mechanical power source. The hand-driven machine was an 1891 model, and owes more to Edison than the Graphophone in its design, although it is most unusual in the design of the reproducer carriage. The only obvious common feature of this and the 1896 Graphophone model is the large flywheel; otherwise, the later machine looks very much like an early Graphophone, of around 1892, although the picture is not sufficiently detailed to indicate whether the cylinder is of the Bell-Tainter or the Edison type. Dr. Lotz's translation of the wording of the 1896 advertisement is as follows:

"For only 125 Marks, the best talking machine, superior to all phonographs".

"Intelligent people will earn lots of money with these machines by public demonstrations. Price Lists and illustrations can be obtained free of charge from the factory."

Perhaps a member in Germany might like to do some research into Költzow; the only distinctive feature common to all the machines so far illustrated is that they rely on an external power source, be it human, electric or calorific, even though the mechanism is mounted on top of a box which could house a motor.

~~~~~

From the 'BOYS' MAGAZINE', circa 1926:

An attorney for the defence was cross-examining a constable who gave evidence in a drunk-and-disorderly case

"What proof have you, Officer, that the defendant was intoxicated, when the landlord of the public house testifies to his leaving in an orderly manner at closing time?"

"Plenty, Sir," replied the limb of the law; "On his way home he picked up a manhole cover, and upon reaching his house, despite the protests of his family, he attempted to play it on the gramophone".

M. John.

## ERRATUM

Frank Andrews' sharp eyes have noticed a slight error in the last part of his article on the Aeolian Vocalion concern; on page 153 in the last issue, paragraph 4, the 4/6d and 3/- records had blue labels, not black as printed. I daresay this will not affect prices at Wandsworth or Picketts Lock.



## Obituary

Members will be sorry to learn of the death at Worthing on January 19th of Sydney H. Carter, at the age of 85.

It is likely that he was the senior member of the Society, and perhaps the last survivor in the membership of those who grew up with a phonograph in the early years of the century, starting with a Puck and transferring to an Edison Fireside, still owned at the time of his death. Although a few years too late to be in at the acceptance of the talking machine in the home, he remained especially fond of the cylinder instrument, and even when recently seriously ill looked forward to returning home to listen to the Amberols.

His devotion to Christian affairs underlined an honest but shrewd business perception that led him into a variety of commercial ventures in life, especially in the electrical and nascent radio trade in the twenties. At one time he related how he and his wife bought and ran a cinema, and installed his own sound system. This acumen enabled him to enjoy a long and comfortable retirement, settling for brief periods in the Antipodes, but eventually returning to London and then to Worthing in 1960.

When writing autobiographically, such as in the April 1979 issue, he used a broad brush and more inner detail would have been welcomed from one so closely connected with the early days of phonographs and gramophones, although he was happy to talk for hours on his memories. In the sixties, in association with the local authority, two exhibitions in Worthing Town Hall were mounted. The second was noted on the national radio and led to some cylinder broadcasts, and up to the time of his last illness many hours were spent transferring to tape and cassettes and a modest start was made on making these generally available. On these and other matters he was a constant correspondent, inviting opinions from those less technically adroit than himself.

For as long as phonographs and cylinders are treasured, Sydney Carter's compilations of Edison, Edison Bell and Sterling catalogues will remain as his memorial. His was the first attempt to list cylinders for collectors' guidance; the 1959 Blue Amberol catalogue of the late Dr. Duane Deakins was probably the first of all, but in the sixties, Carter with the co-operation of the late Gerry Annand and others published list after list of 2 and 4-minute cylinders, with secretarial help from his wife. He also started the manufacture of small spares, which became the foundation of the Society's spares list.

As a friend and counsellor of many years, he is much missed. He is survived by Mrs. Nellie Carter, to whom the Society extends its sympathy.



# The Finest Cabinet Instruments COLUMBIA GRAFONOLAS

## Look at the MOTOR

THE motor of a gramophone is as the engine to a car—the vital part. And the motor in a Columbia Grafonola is the finest in any gramophone—an engineering unit with a reserve of power ensuring complete control and most important of all, holding the record speed absolutely true to pitch. Examine the Columbia motor and compare.



## Columbia No. 27 £40

The Columbia No. 27 Grafonola illustrated is typical of Columbia value, and has won the distinction of being the most popular model in cabinets. At its price there is no better value available.

Solid Mahogany, 43 ins. high, 19½ ins. wide, 21 ins. deep, Triple-Spring Motor Unit.

## Other Cabinet Models of Columbia Grafonola

Fitted with the wonderful  
Columbia Motor Unit.

### No. 26 (Mahogany) .. £30

Astounding Cabinet value at this price. Triple-Spring Motor Unit. Height 39½ ins., width 17½ ins., depth 18½ ins.

### No. 28 (Jacobean) .. £45

Solid Oak, Jacobean finish, a fine type. Triple-Spring Motor Unit. Height 43½ ins., width 22 ins., depth 22 ins.

### No. 29 (Mahogany) .. £50

Equipped with Six Record Albums, Triple-Spring Motor Unit. Height 45 ins., width 21 ins., depth 21 ins.

### No. 30 (Mahogany) .. £60

Equipped with six Record Albums & Gilt Fittings, Four-Spring Motor Unit. Height 46½ ins., width 21½ ins., depth 19½ ins.

### No. 31 (Mahogany) .. £65

Equipped with six Record Albums & Gilt Fittings, Four-Spring Motor Unit. Height 47½ ins., depth 21½ ins., width 19 ins.

### No. 50 (Chinese Lac) .. £52 10s.

Chinese Black and Gold Lacquer Decoration on Mahogany. Four-Spring Motor Unit. Height 39½ ins., depth 18½ ins., width 17½ ins.

### No. 51 (Chinese Lac) .. £55

This is identical in size, shape and equipment with the popular No. 27, but in Chinese Black and Gold Lacquer decoration on Mahogany.

# Columbia





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# Life Among Gramophones

---

by Ted Cunningham

My earliest recollection is of falling down a flight of stairs at the age of three, clutching an open portable gramophone. It was my parents' machine but had become my greatest love, and was regularly placed on the floor for my use. It was black and I'm fairly sure it was a Decca: the picture which comes to mind vividly now is not the bowl reflector but the bright silver stubby horn rising from the tone-arm. I remember only one record, entitled 'Freckleface', which I persisted in playing over and over again; anybody living in my neighbourhood at that time will no doubt remember it too, indelibly.

I cannot recall why, on the occasion of the catastrophe, I wished to carry the gramophone downstairs, but I recollect with gratification that my parents, rushing to the scene, concerned themselves entirely with my wellbeing, paying no heed to any damage which might have been sustained by their instrument. If faced with a similar emergency today I hope I could bring myself to allocate priorities with the same humanitarian instinct. I can place the incident accurately in time since it happened just before my family moved house. Whether or not as a direct consequence of my musical accident, our new home was a ground-floor flat in which no gramophone featured.

My life continued uneventfully, and bereft of gramophones, until the outbreak of war. Then, even at the age of seven, I was removed from home and parents when my whole school was evacuated to Derbyshire. Our home town of Southend-on-sea was considered to be too vulnerable to marauding enemy bombers. Why the authorities thought the town's children would be more safe from bombs in the heart of the Midlands coal-mining belt, just a few miles down the road from Derby and its Rolls-Royce aircraft engine factory, is one of the unsolved mysteries of the war. Here for a brief time I was billeted on a pleasant middle-aged couple, childless until my advent, who were very kind. Their tiny house fascinated me. It had lighting which one switched on with a match. It had a remarkable wireless set which didn't plug into anything except a square jam-jar full of water! But it had no gramophone.

I must have been a handful for my hosts because after a few months they decided that life had not equipped them to cope with a small but imaginative child. Still determined to do their bit for the war effort, they swapped me for two fully-grown miners, evidently considering them to be less trouble.

I found myself in a minor stately home which had been turned into a hostel for evacuee children. It was here that I encountered my first electric gramophone, a beautiful walnut-finished box which stood on a table in Matron's office. By a miracle of science its sound emerged into our playroom at the other end of the house. Its purpose was to entertain us on rainy afternoons, but in practice it remained largely unused, since only rarely could any of the overworked staff be spared to act as disc-jockey.



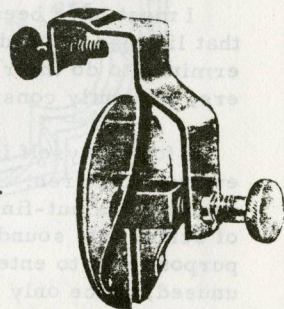
An epidemic of mumps struck the hostel: I succumbed only when everyone else was getting over it. Thus I was leaping about the place, still in quarantine but boisterously active, long after all the others were back at school. One day, at her wits' end to keep me occupied, Matron invited me into the office to play the gramophone. I responded like a starving man who has rediscovered steak and onions, and spent the succeeding afternoons in a blissful daze. Quick to realise that I was more adept in handling the machinery than she was, Matron appointed me Master of the Records, charged with the presentation of future Rainy Afternoon Specials. Although conscious of the heady power with which this preferment invested me, I did not allow success to spoil me. At any rate, not much. But no other child was ever allowed within ten yards of that immaculate shining walnut box: it was mine.

When presenting recitals I found the problem of programme content effectively solved for me by the fact that the hostel boasted only eleven records. Both sides of each of these would always feature at least once, and often twice, in each of my programmes. Variety was introduced by changing the order in which they were played. Much excitement was generated amongst my listening audience by this means, as they waited in suspense, wondering whether Victor Sylvester's 'Elmer's Tune' would be followed by Gracie Fields singing 'Clogs and Shawl' or by the Emperor Waltz. Perceptive readers will recognise that at the tender age of nine I was pioneering a technique highly favoured today among Commercial Radio presenters. Of course, I had no microphone with which to make linking chat, and this is another technique which I fervently recommend to the professional disc-jockeys.

The high-spot of 1941 was the arrival at the hostel of Nurse Thurman, who brought with her a new record which she foolishly agreed to put at my disposal. It was the Warsaw Concerto. This one record opened up a whole new world for me. The fact that it was the biggest I had ever seen (remember, so far my experience was limited to the hostel eleven plus 'Freckleface') was of minor significance. The real bombshell was the realisation that it was possible for a piece of music to come to a temporary stop at the end of one side of a record and then begin again on the second side, just like Sandy Powell in 'The Lost Policeman'. This nugget of knowledge has stood me in good stead throughout later life, preparing me for the discovery of compositions so long that they actually went on to a second disc. I have to report that the Warsaw Concerto was not a success with my public. They preferred the old songs.



The strange-looking object on the right appeared in The Talking Machine News for May 1911, and was described as a volume control which fitted on to a soundbox at the top, the circular damper being adjustable to press more or less hard against the diaphragm. It was marketed by Murdoch's. What effect the restriction of the diaphragm may have had on record wear, I will leave to Messrs. Harbour and Cosens to discuss! - Ed.





# Technical Forum

MIKE FIELD

Standard-sized Edison reproducers are often found in a very sorry state. The most common problems are breakage of the hinge-block where it fits into the body and breakage of the limit hoop. For those with a little mechanical dexterity, the following notes outline one method of renovation.

The method is intended for Model C and H reproducers, which are the most common, but with some slight adaptation will equally suit a Model B. Let us assume the reproducer is in two pieces; the hinge-block has sheared off and the broken thread remains in the body. Start dismantling by removing the stylus pivot screw. Push the stylus-bar out of its stirrup mounting and lift the flap gently so that the stylus-bar will pass through the centre, still connected by the wire link. Unhook the link from the diaphragm. Remove the limit pin. (Use small pliers initially to start the thread unscrewing, or you may break the head). Next attempt to remove the hinge-pin which is securing the broken hinge block to the flap using a small jewellers screw-driver. Very often this pin is rusted in and may be very difficult to turn. If, after judicious use of easing oil, the pin cannot be turned without breaking the head, leave it and put the flap on one side. Turning attention to the body, unscrew the serrated retaining ring holding in the diaphragm, using the spanner shown in Fig. 2. Remove the diaphragm and washers. (If the diaphragm is stuck, try blowing down the horn outlet tube.)

## HINGE BLOCK

Assuming the sheared-off screw is still in the body, support the body with the horn tube uppermost under suitable drilling apparatus. A sensitive pillar drill is ideal, but the job can be done with a light hand-drill provided you keep it upright and square. Do not attempt to use a pistol drill or you will almost certainly snap the tiny drill required. The original screw is not usually full length and there should be a short part of unfilled thread when viewed from the top of the body. If not and the old screw is flush with the surface or even proud, it must be made flush and a centre punch mark made exactly in the centre.

The original American thread is 0 by 80. If you have threading taps of this size and brass screws to match, drill the screw out using a 3/64in. (.047in.) drill and re-tap. Retap from the top of the body downwards. This because the shell of the old screw will still be in there and tapping this way should screw it out. In the UK, however, American taps and screws are not readily available; the nearest equivalent size is 10BA, which requires the old screw to be drilled out with a No. 56 drill. Retap as above, but using a 10BA tap. Be carefull! Small taps break very easily and are difficult to extract without damaging the body. Use minimal pressure, clear the swarf regularly and stop if you encounter sudden stiffness.

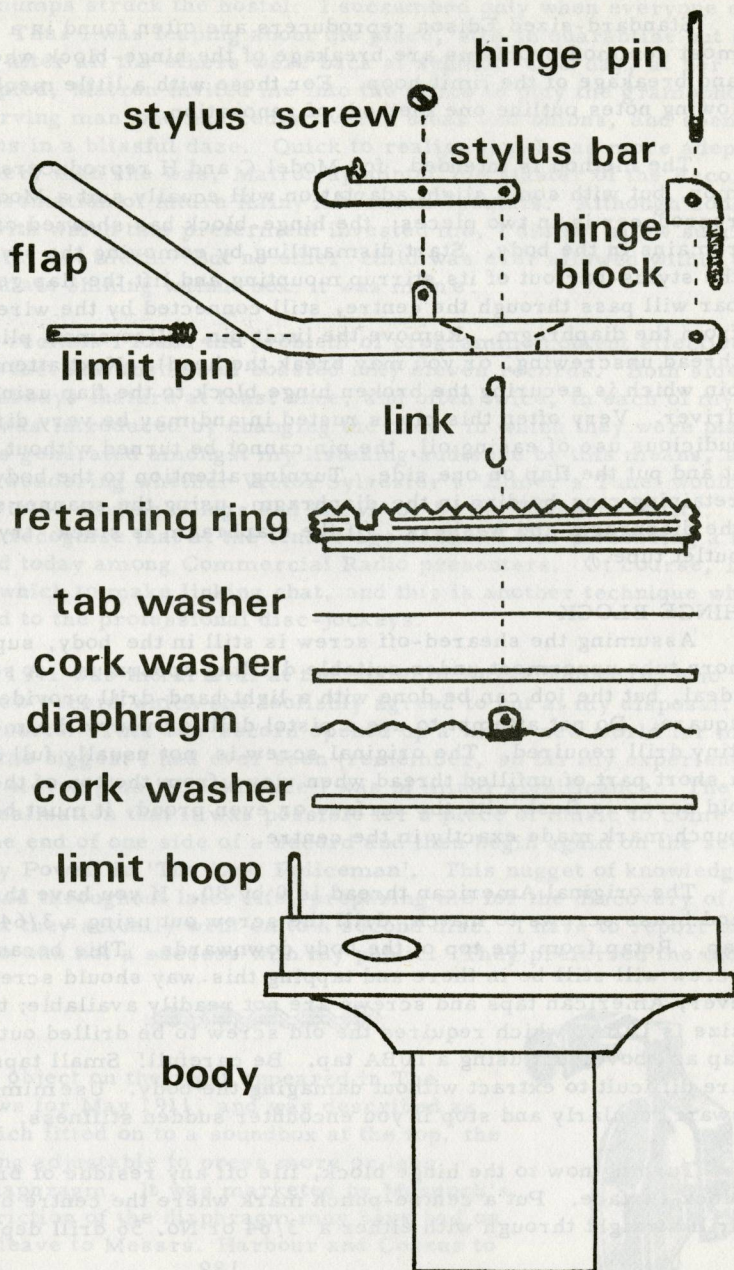
Turning now to the hinge block, file off any residue of broken thread flush with the block surface. Put a centre-punch mark where the centre of the thread will be and drill straight through with either a 3/64 or No. 56 drill depending on whether you are



going to tap 0 by 80 or 10 BA. Ensure that the hole is drilled perpendicular to the underside of the block surface. This is relatively easy if you have been able to remove the block from the flap. If not, and the block is still pivoted to the flap, you will have to pack it so that the block does not move during drilling. When drilling is completed, tap the hole with the chosen tap. Place a little Loctite or Araldite in the thread in the block and screw a suitable screw down from the top of the block until  $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. protrudes from the bottom. Clean off any surplus adhesive from the projecting thread and leave 24 hours to set. (Alternatively, the thread could be soldered in position using solder paste and a butane blow-torch.) File off the head of the screw and any surplus thread to conform to the original contour of the hinge-block.

#### LIMIT HOOP

If enough length of the bits of the broken hoop projects above the surface, heat the area gently with a gas torch until the solder melts and the bits can be removed. If not, file the



**FIG. I EXPLODED DIAGRAM**



ends flush and punch them about  $1/16$ -in. below the surface with a suitable pin punch, panel pin or ground-off needle. This is necessary to give an accurate guide to the drilling operation. Drill out to a depth of  $3/16$ -in. using a No. 60 (.040in.) drill. If the bits were removed by desoldering, clean out the holes with the drill anyway. Take an ordinary paper clip and cut a suitable U-shaped piece of it so that, when pushed fully home in the newly-drilled holes, it projects just over  $3/16$ -in. above the surface. Solder in place if solder paste is available; if not, fix with a little Araldite.

## RE-ASSEMBLY

Following the exploded diagram (Fig 1), first put a new diaphragm cork in position, then a new diaphragm (or the old one if sound) followed by the second cork gasket. Fit the steel washer with its tab in the hole provided. (This is usually under the limit hoop, but may also be found 90 degrees anti-clockwise from that position.) Screw in the retaining ring and align the stud in the centre of the diaphragm so that the hole in it is at 90 degrees to a line drawn through the hinge block and the limit hoop. Tighten with the spanner. The question is, How tight? Too loose will cause blasting on loud or sustained notes; Too tight will make the sound shrill and tinny. The pressure required to turn the average water-tap off with finger and thumb is about right, using a spanner of the size given. Make sure the diaphragm is actually held tight when the ring feels tight - the ring might be binding in the thread. Correct pressure on the diaphragm is a bit subjective and it may be a case of trial and error.

Fig 2 Spanner

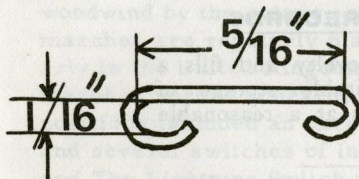
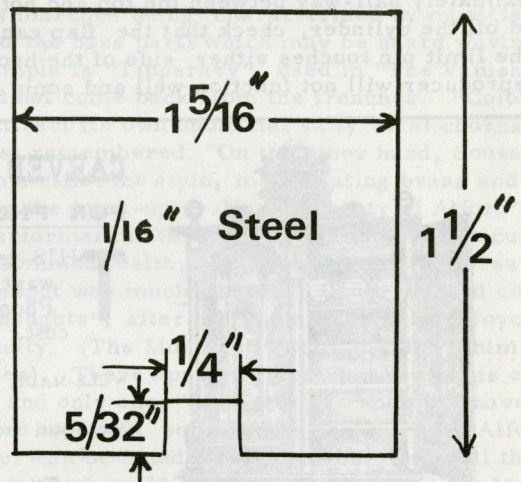


Fig 3 Link



If you were able to remove the hinge pin during dismantling, just screw in the block; if not, screw in the block while still attached to the flap. Screw down until the block is fully home and then unscrew it slightly until the flap is in the correct position. At this stage you should be able to move the flap a few degrees either side of centre with little or no pressure. Next attach the stylus-bar to the wire link. This link may of course be missing or damaged and if so a new one may be made. I find

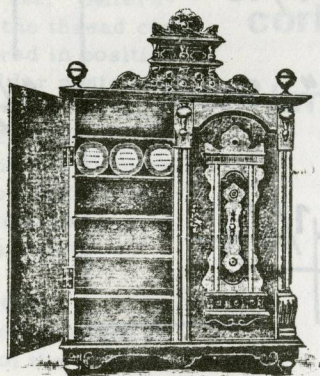


a very suitable wire is that used on the older type of transistor in radios and this can easily be scrounged from radio/television repairers. (Ordinary copper wire is a little too soft and this transistor wire is much harder. The diameter is approximately 0.18in. - say 26 SWG). Form it to shape and size as in Fig. 3.

Attach the other end of the link to the stud in the centre of the diaphragm so that the stylus itself is pointing uppermost when the stylus end of the bar is pointing away from the hinge block. Hold the body steady so that the stylus bar hangs down vertically. If the flap is attached to the hinge block, swing it upwards so that the stylus bar passes through the hole; if the flap is not yet connected to the hinge block, offer it up so that the stylus bar passes through the hole and the flap 'sits' in the correct position relative to the hinge block. Holding the flap to the body with finger and thumb, turn the assembly over and lay the stylus bar in its stirrup. If appropriate, fit the hinge pin.

Re-fit the stylus screw and, with the flap uppermost and resting on the body, check that the stylus bar is roughly parallel to the flap surface. If not, the wire link must be lengthened or shortened as necessary. Finally, fit the limit pin and check that the movement of the flap up and down is limited by the hoop. If not, bend the hoop gently to achieve this.

Fit the reproducer in the machine. If it is difficult to get in, the hinge block may be fouling and will need gentle filing. When it is fully home and fixed with its screw, put a cylinder on and check, with the stylus down on the cylinder, that the limit pin is approximately half-way between the top and bottom of the limit hoop. With the stylus raised off the cylinder, check that the flap can easily be moved from side to side so that the limit pin touches either side of the hoop. If these conditions do not obtain, the reproducer will not function well and some re-adjustment will be necessary.



## CARVED OAK CABINET FOR PHONOGRAPH RECORDS.

**T**HIS is a decided novelty and fills a want for the suitable storage of Phonograph Records at a reasonable cost.

WELL-MADE, STRONG AND HANDSOMELY FINISHED.

|                                     |           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| No. 1 size for 3 doz. Records .. .. | 15/- each |
| " 2 " 6 " " " " " " " " " "         | 22/6 "    |

*Fitted with Lock and Key and Eyelets to Hang on the Wall.*

This record cabinet, like the Zonophone shown on this month's front cover, comes from a Gamages catalogue of 1902. Although the cabinet does not, like the better-known Britannia, include a space for a phonograph, its stylistic resemblance to a disc musical box case is no less marked.



# People, Paper & Things

G. Frow

From Morocco Jean Paul Agnard has sent in a colour photograph of a fine framed tapestry he and his wife have made of Nipper listening to the electric phonograph with the curved horn - the trial run for the Trade Mark picture. It consists of over 100,000 stitches and looks to be about 3ft. x 2ft. (1m. x 70cm.) Unfortunately it seems that this will not reproduce to advantage in the black-and-white of this magazine, as we would have liked members to see the result of what must have been a great planning exercise before any stitching was started.

The pastime of "Spot the Centenary" is a godsend to radio and television, particularly to the former, where it allows for illustrated talks to be devoted to the least-known of foreign musicians of the middle ages, as well as observing the centenaries of the more illustrious; a recent example was Offenbach last October. The centenary business also provides at least two programmes per hundred years - birth and death - and if the subject be sufficiently illustrious, then it can be broken down into 25-year multiples. February's centenary marked a British composer not familiar to everybody, but everyone is familiar with at least one of his many compositions. On February 21st 1881 was born Frederick Joseph Ricketts, who under the pseudonym of Kenneth (or K. J.) Alford wrote marches, suites, switches, pot-pourris, instrumental pieces and grand opera arrangements for military bands and orchestras in considerable output. Although sometimes called "The British Sousa", the two composers had a somewhat different style, Alford's marches being characterised by musicianly construction, with noticeable attention to the bass parts which may be heard waving threads through the fabric. Such an example is "Tipperary", used in "The Vanished Army" (1919) as tribute to those who did not come back from the trenches. "Colonel Bogey" (1914) appeared just in time to attract its own unofficial salty vocal chorus, and it is by this march that Alford is best remembered. On the other hand, Sousa aimed to make his marches colourful in a different style, manipulating brass and woodwind by the octave, and accentuating the 'pick-up'. Nearly twenty of Alford's marches are regularly played in band performances throughout the world, particularly in the United Kingdom and the Old Commonwealth, about the number of Sousa marches normally heard, although his output was much greater. Other Alford compositions included an excellent waltz "Thoughts", after the style of Archibald Joyce, and several switches of incredible ingenuity. (The Musical Switch, Wedded Whimsies and The Lightning Switch are all examples). There apparently exist many of his operatic selections, although rarely aired, and only one, "Carmen", is known to have been recorded. (HMV C 3188). May we hope that some of the non-military Alford works can be again heard. A fair number can be found on 78 records, while all the marches have been recorded over and over both on 78 and l.p. K. J. Alford (or Major 'Joe' Ricketts R. M.) retired from directing the Plymouth Band of the Royal Marines in 1944, and died in the next year. As a young bandmaster he took the band of the 2nd. Bttn. of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders on a world tour in 1925 (the marches Old Panama and Dunedin grew from this tour, and the Musical Switch was specially compiled) and just afterwards two records of the Band under his baton, but not credited on the labels, were issued on Zonophone 2807 (Great Little Army) and



2875 (Colonel Bogey). These are a creator's records as much as Richard Strauss or Hoagy Carmichael in their own music, and should be put on one side even if the material is not to the finder's taste. Ricketts made a number of records for HMV from 1939 to 1941 with his Plymouth Band, and these can be found quite frequently.

Two points arise from the preceding paragraph. The well-known march "Namur" by Richards is an enigma, being of very similar construction to an Alford march, and it is generally thought that Alford, who was a Kneller Hall music student with Richards, may well have done a friend a favour before examination time, a practice not unknown in musical establishments. Richards never came up with any other piece of music worth noting. The second point is that at the time of writing (January 1981), following the Famous Conductors issue of commemoration stamps a year ago, representation has been made from an influential source to the Postmaster General for a similar issue of four stamps to honour British composers, Kenneth Alford being one of them.

A recent magazine for the Old Boys of a school has noted the availability of fifty copies in vinyl of the 78 recordings of School Songs made in 1934 and long out of stock in shellac form. That EMI should do this for C 68 gives hope that perhaps one day some of the Company's other treasures may become available to collectors in this form; after experiences with certain discs in the B.I.R.S. set some years ago, we may have to wait a little longer and be prepared to accept vinyls from later rather than earlier masters.

No. 1 of a series of reference books has just been published. This is Music on Record No. 1 - Brass Bands by Peter Gammond and Raymond Horricks, with contributions from W.A. Chislett. Brass bands are not to everybody's liking, but they have a growing following and reputation in the United Kingdom which has caught internationally. What used to be very much of a cloth cap hobby fifty or more years ago is now a highly professionalised business with playing standards unheard by earlier generations. Although this book lists only microgroove records and is thus perhaps outside our scope, there are extensive references to bands and their conductors that all who search through record heaps will recognise, and some perhaps will want to know about. Why the different St. Hilda Bands? What were the various Championships? The Mortimer family, the Rimmers and so on are effectively sorted out. The book is published by Patrick Stephens, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8EL at £7.95 (ISBN 0 85059 366 2) and is the first attempt at the subject in this form; others in preparation will cover The Big Bands, Military Bands, Cinema Organs and G + S, and will be noticed if it seems that some of the membership might like to know about them.

Mention of Gilbert and Sullivan is a reminder that a recent issue of Michael Walters' "Gilbertian Gossip" has come to hand. This runs to 29 very full sheets of review and comment on recent professional and amateur productions, and does embrace a few non-G+S operettas. Members may obtain details of this privately circulated magazine from Michael Walters, c/o British Museum, Tring, Herts, England.

Collectors recognise and accept that there is an uneducable "scratchy old record"



clique on B. B. C. radio, and this is doubtless true of a lot of places outside Great Britain; really, with the studios awash with l.p. and tape of the latest in serious and pop music, it is a fact that time makes for an ageing and diminishing 78 clientele. A certain Young Thing puts out an hour of lighter classics and popular show music on B. B. C. radio each week, and has been heard to eschew such as Myra Hess's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring", solely because "it is on an old 78", obviously unaware that this (HMV) piece has appeared on l.p. transfers on occasion. Some months ago it was astonishing to hear this Young Thing, in searching for music by Louis Jullien, the composer and eccentric impresario of 130 years or so ago, play his "Sleigh Ride Polka", performed by the Coldstream Guards Band under Dr. Mackenzie Rogan on C 650, a 79 recorded in 1914. The surface was remarkably good for what could have been a wartime pressing, and listeners were informed that some clicking on the record were whip lashes. No mention was made of the age of this record, in fact it played quite well to the ear accustomed to early records, and no mention, no realisation perhaps, that all the performers could now be dead. What is more, the Young Thing played the record again on her last programme for 1980, so may be in the early stages of conversion. If found, "Sleigh Ride Polka" is quite an acceptable novelty, and is one of Jullien's few recorded compositions. One of those flamboyant 19th-century characters who combined the showmanship of Cochran and the musical leadership of Hylton - comparable Americans come easily to mind - Jullien was endowed with thirty-six Christian names, one from each of his Godparents, and these and an odd life may have weighed heavily towards his early death in 1860, after losing his reason.

## Gamage's No. 21

# TALKING MACHINE.

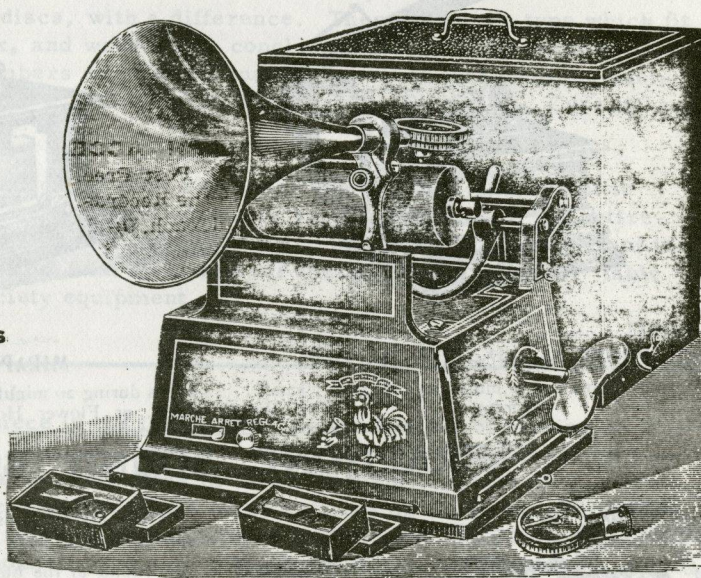
**Special Value!!!**

Complete with **Recording** and  
**Reproducing Diaphragms**

# £1. 17. 6.

Including 1-Record and 1 Blank Cylinder.

THIS MACHINE takes EDISON-BELL,  
PATHE and NEW CENTURY RECORDS.



The Pathé Gaulois, perhaps the only attempt by another manufacturer to copy Edison's Gem, is here seen masquerading as "Gamage's No. 21 Talking Machine" (1902).



# MERMOD FRÈRES,

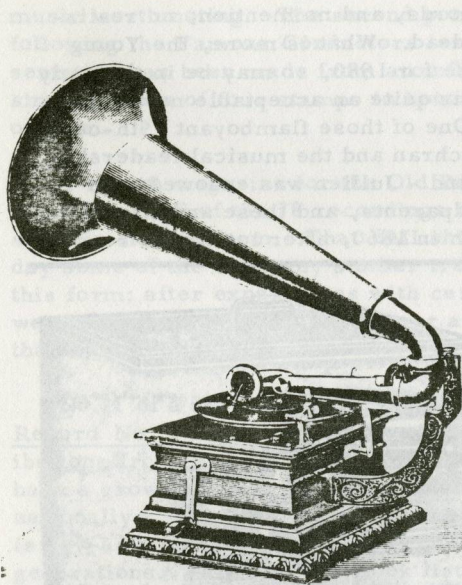
Ste. CROIX, SWITZERLAND.

Established in 1816.

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## MIRAPHONE DISC MACHINES. STELLA and MIRA MUSIC BOXES.

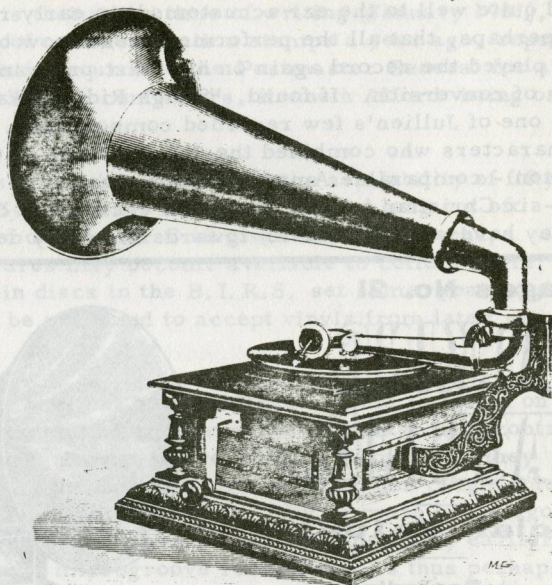
MIRAPHONE SOUND BOXES, TONE ARMS. Complete Motors ready to be fitted into Any Cabinet.



MIRAPHONE No. 102—COIN MACHINE.

Plays, fully wound up, 10 minutes (4 large or 7 small records).

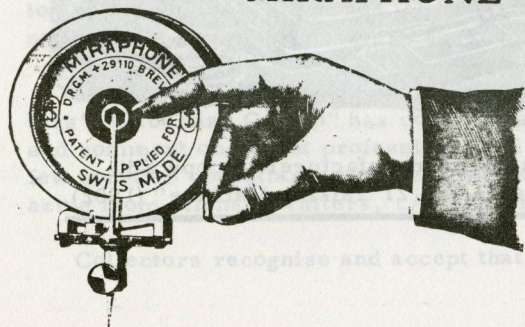
With Nickel.



MIRAPHONE No. 103.

Plays during 20 minutes (8 large or 15 small records).  
Brass, or Flower Horn.

## MIRAPHONE SOUND BOX.



These are the most perfect and solid Sound Boxes on the market, they give in a splendid and true way the sound of the human voice. The construction is perfect, no glue or wax used, the membrane is fixed between two screw-nuts.

These Patented Sound Boxes can be adapted to any known plates talking machines.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE POST FREE

UPON RECEIPT OF TRADE CARD.



# London Meeting

DECEMBER

In the very rare absence of the Chairman, this meeting was chaired by the President, George Frow. Members had been invited to bring along a selection of records with a festive theme. Although Christmas Day was but two days away, we had a very good attendance.

After a short delay, due to technical difficulties, we were treated to a wide variety of music on all sorts of labels. Frank Andrews clarified a few technical points on some of the records played, and his own contribution was *Adeste Fideles* sung by 4850 voices, the famous record used to demonstrate the advent of electrical recording in 1925. This was followed by 'I Miss my Swiss' (Paul Whiteman and Orchestra) which Frank loaned to another member for the evening.

John McKeown provided a tape recording of the Queen's Dolls House record. He pointed out that this had to be played at a speed well over 100 rpm on a special platform with a pin for the spindle. He also played a conventional record in the form of 'Jesu Bambino' sung by Peter Dawson.

George Frow showed how to become intoxicated within the duration of a three-minute record; one of his records was 'Little Brown Jug' by Frank Crumit. One hopes his choice of record was not a reflection on his upbringing.

Len Watts provided three discs, with a difference. These were the type which fit on a Calliope disc musical box, and were a fine conclusion to a very interesting choice of records. Other members who made equally important contributions included G. Edwards, P. Martland, T. Massey, D. Roberts, R. Fisher, E. Cunningham and B. Raynaud.

A vote of thanks was extended to Frank who supplied suitable refreshment to toast the Season of Goodwill. Best wishes were also extended to him on his retirement from work, which gives him more time to study and document the history of the talking machine. We also thanked John McKeown for the loan of an HMV 127 table grand as an addition to the Society equipment.

DRR.

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## DUPLICATING TINFOIL

Following J. P. Agnard's piece in the last issue, on the subject of making a moulded copy of a tinfoil cylinder, Richard Parkes of Sutton Coldfield has turned up a reference to the duplicating of tinfoil recordings in 'The Pictorial Cabinet of Marvels', a publication of 1879 which included one of the many articles on sound recording published around that time. The relevant passage reads as follows: "In using the machine for the purpose of correspondence, the metal strips are removed from the cylinder and sent to the person with whom the speaker desires to correspond. . . . . The sender can make an indefinite number of copies of his communication by taking a plaster of Paris cast of the original strip and rubbing off impressions from it on a clean sheet of tinfoil." A similar account of the phonograph was published in 'Good Words'



for 1878, by Professor W.F. Barrett, and here the possibility of electrotpe copies was suggested. What neither of these contemporary accounts seems to have envisaged was the copying of the tinfoil cylinder intact; it was necessary to flatten the tinfoil out, and one wonders whether the Pictorial Cabinet's idea of copying on to another piece of foil from a cast would have worked very effectively. It was mainly because of the difficulty of duplicating from a cylinder (even if it could be removed from the mandrel intact) that Edison experimented with a disc tinfoil machine.

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## London Meeting

JANUARY

An interesting recital of records from the HMV 'Historical Catalogue' was presented by John McKeown. Apart from the lecture and recital, there was a display of 'Historic' labels on a side-table, ranging from the plum label through black, red, buff and green to the exclusive pink (Patti) and dark blue (Butt).

By 1923 the Gramophone Company had been in existence for twenty-five years and it was seen that the gramophone was playing an important part historically in music. Accordingly a special catalogue of "Records of Unique and Historic Interest" was issued. (The exact date of the first issue has yet to be determined).

The first catalogue contained some 200 records, many of them single-sided. Additions were made over the years, including some electrics. At its peak there were about 400 Historical records available, but with deletions in the 1940s, there were only 52 records left, including twenty-three single-sided (the latter embracing seventeen Patti records), in 1946.

The 'Historic' catalogue had been divided into three parts: (1) The Art of a Past Generation; (2) The Development of an Art (i. e. the Art of recording); and (3) History Told by the Gramophone. The recital followed these divisions as far as possible. The following records were played:

DB696 Lolita, Caruso  
D803 To the Spring, Edvard Grieg  
D803 Hungarian Dance No. 2, Joachim  
B1778 Where are you Going to, my Pretty Maid?, Dan Leno  
D92 Part of Beethoven's Fifth, Nikisch  
03059 Robin Adair, Patti  
E82 Simon the Cellarer, Santley  
E329 Zigeunerweiser, Sarasate  
E161 Anthony's Lament, Beerbohm Tree  
D373 The Fallen Star, Albert Chevalier  
DB440 Die Walkure, Clarence Whitehill

D822 I'll Sing the Songs of Araby,  
Edward Lloyd.  
D376 Hunting Calls, Viscount Gal-  
Way  
09308 Gas Shell Bombardment  
D381 Land and Labour, J. C. Wedg-  
wood M. P.  
B390 Nightingales  
D456 Elgar's Starlight Express  
An excerpt from Camactacus  
directed by Elgar from his  
sick-bed.

L. W.



# Record Reviews

## WORLD'S RAREST RECORDINGS - THE BETTINI CYLINDERS

The year 1901 is regarded by most collectors as the starting point of recorded singing, the so-called Golden Age, and not all turn their heads to look back on what led up to this period. There were a few creators' records and others on Berliners in the last year or two of the century, and it is perhaps understandable to overlook the works of Gianni Bettini, because so very few of his cylinders have ever been found. He had been making cylinders of musical celebrities in New York from 1891 or 1892, and this continued for about ten years until he moved over briefly to Paris and set up recording there. Apart from his several records of Pope Leo XIII in 1903, he then slipped from the scene.

The first example generally heard of a Bettini recording was a Concert cylinder of Marcella Sembrich singing "Voices of Spring", a happy piece that was found in New Zealand about twenty years ago and made available privately on a 7-inch microgroove copy. Some years earlier Ray Phillips had come across some standard Bettinis in Mexico city. The best of these, some 18 items, are now available on l.p. disc. Most are vocal extracts from grand operas, exceptions being a piece from Audran's "La Mascotte", an Andalusian song, and three items from Cafés Concerts; these last may have been made in the Paris period, but the writer knows nothing at all about their background. An operatic rarity is the duet from Marchetti's "Ruy Blas". Was this Filippo Marchetti (1831 - 1902) who is normally associated with the Fascination Waltz?

Artists whose performance are identified are Alberto de Bassini, Gina Ciaparelli, Dante del Papa and Rosalia Chalia. Of these Ciaparelli would record extensively for American and Italian Columbia and Victor, sometimes as Gina Viafora.

As to the technical quality, there is of course surface noise on all the recordings. This does not appear to have been filtered or doctored to any extent, but it is not more than would be expected of any records of this age, and all but one which has probably a bite out of its end, are played right through without distracting patches of mush or swish; from memory all are superior to the Mapleson fragments. The recording level is low, but gives the listener enough scope to make plenty of adjustment to suit himself.

All the items are announced - presumably this was the Lieutenant himself - and piano accompanied. A particularly enjoyable enigma, a Café Concert "Valse des Chopines" (Waltz of the Pints) is sung as a duet by two females. There are extensive notes by Jim Walsh which present practically everything that must be known of Bettini. This recording is commended to those who study the early phonograph and those who follow recorded vocal art. They are certainly the earliest records of a cultural nature they are ever likely to hear.

G. L. F.  
OBTAINABLE FROM: Mark 56 Records, [REDACTED] Anaheim, California 92805.  
\$7.95 + \$3.50 postage; the Society has ordered a number of copies..



It would be absurd to pretend that this recording is the best available of THE MIKADO, but this first 'complete' recording of any G + S opera, and possibly the third 'complete' recording of any opera (Bauer lists only two earlier) is of such historical importance that it should have a place in every G + S enthusiast's collection. Its importance, of course, centres around the presence in the cast of Walter Passmore - although I cannot agree with John Wolfson's opinion (in his erudite sleeve-notes) that this is one of Passmore's best recordings - at least on the basis of these transfers.

Pre-electric 78s present problems in transferring to l.p. as few of them actually play at 78 rpm. The sides of these discs vary considerably; I have a number of them and some of the voices fluctuate alarmingly in tone and pitch at 78 rpm. Mr. Wolfson is of course keenly aware of this problem, and in preparing the transfers he and his colleagues will have carefully assessed the acceptable speed for each side. I am not entirely convinced, however, that the speed chosen when transferring was always correct. Walter Passmore's voice sounds to me too low-pitched in some of the items; the opening chorus seems to suffer from the same problem, and Walter Hyde in "Gentlemen, I pray you" sounds quite baritone. One very surprising comment from Mr. Wolfson is that the recording contains a chorus, when it is clear that the 'chorus' consists of the principal singers only; seldom are more than two or three voices to be heard together. Much of the opening chorus, for example, is in unison, but where the voices divide, the tenor line is missing!

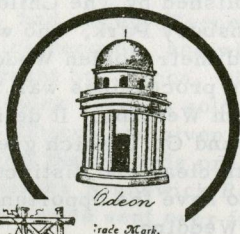
I have been unable to find out anything about the ladies on this recording, nor do I know of any other recordings by them; it is not unlikely, therefore, that the names are pseudonyms. Their performances are unmemorable. Harry Dearth gives by far the best performance, in purely musical terms. If, as Mr. Wolfson believes, Dearth watched the opera at the Savoy (with Barrington in the cast) before making the recording, then Dearth's magnificent rendering of the interrupted cadenza in the Act 1 finale may be the nearest we (and posterity) will ever get to hearing the voice of Rutland Barrington. Incidentally, the interruption ("Thank you sir" - "I haven't finished") has become traditional, and is still performed in some amateur productions, though it has long been dropped from D'Oyly Carte performances. For a singer of his importance, I find Walter Hyde's performance frankly disappointing. On the records his voice sounds to me thin and strained in many numbers - particularly on his top Gs. For some curious reason he sings a top G on the word "AND hi arm around her waist" where an F is written. Harry Thornton was a minor singer and made a number of records, many for the less important labels. His rather thick accent is characteristic: "This very day from school Yoom-Yoom

Will wend her way and homeward coom."

Listeners will notice in a number of places that the words are different to those with which we are familiar; most of these differences are not errors, but the words in use at that time. The orchestrations are not Sullivan's (they would not have been available to Odeon), and are curious, even bizarre. This MIKADO does not measure up to the 1917 HMV recording (not currently available), but by the standards of the day the recording quality is remarkably clear, and reproduces better than some later 78s.

Michael Walters.



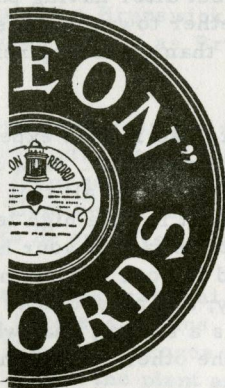


GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S COMPLETE OPERA  
Has been Reproduced on a Series of Twelve  
**ODEON RECORDS**  
4 Shillings each. Double-sided.

Buyers of the Set receive in addition to the 12 Records an Embossed Album, a Portrait of the Artist, an Art Brochure 16 pages 2 1/2 x 3 1/2.

Mr. Walter Parrington has supervised the arrangements, and takes the leading part. THE ODEON AGENCY, 32, Warwick Street, E.C.

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You cannot properly .  
appreciate the amount  
of pure unadulterated  
pleasure to be derived  
from a talking machine  
unless you buy . . .

4 /   
each

## ODEON Records:

*Write for a copy of*

**NEW CATALOGUE** (40 Pages.)

*Giving full particulars of the .*  
*magnificent repertoire. . .*

### **SOME GEMS for MUSIC LOVERS.**

COMPLETE OPERAS OF  
**THE MIKADO and H.M.S. PINAFORE**

(Gilbert and Sullivan).  
NOW BEING PLAYED AT THE SAVOY  
THEATRE, LONDON.  
Complete with Album.

RECORDS BY THE COMPLETE SHEFFIELD AND  
LEEDS CHOIRS.

Unless you purchase .

**ODEON RECORDS**

(Double-Sided 4/- each, 10 3/4-in.)

you are not getting . .

proper value out of

your instrument. . . .

*Sole Wholesale Dept.,*  
32, Warwick St., G.C.

The Odeon advertisement above appeared in September 1908, and is the earliest I have found advertising the MIKADO. (The specific ad. for this set, inset bottom left, was published in October 1908). However, the PINAFORE set was announced in January of the same year, which seems to make that, not MIKADO, the first 'complete' G + S recording. - Ed. (See Michael Walters' review on previous page)



# POINTS & QUERIES

A member writes asking for information on a National Band portable in his possession, which has been fitted at some stage with an H.M.V. soundbox. Apart from wondering what soundbox it should have, the member also wondered when the machine was made.

I have no documentary information on National Band, but I have seen several portable gramophones of this make, and even a National Band needle tin. All these portables were obviously post-war in date, and the description of this one suggests a similar date, with a copper-coloured finish to many of the parts and chromium on others. Soundboxes seem to have been of the late Goldring type, with a circular panel in the centre of the mask bearing a National Band label. Now can anyone come up with any information on the National Band Gramophone Co. and its dates of operation?

Another member, T.P. Cornell, of Peterborough, has come across a note in a July 1890 magazine called 'Highways and Hedges', published by The Children's Home. It seems that a certain Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell, of Finsbury Park, who were benefactors of the Children's Home, had recently celebrated their Golden Wedding:

"A very pleasing and interesting feature of the day's proceedings was the exhibition of a phonograph - its first appearance at a Golden Wedding. It delivered the following congratulatory message from Messrs Edison and Co., which greatly interested and delighted those present, as they listened to its clear and distinct delivery:-

'The Phonograph esteems it a very rare privilege to have the opportunity of congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell upon their Golden Wedding.

'Fifty years is a long time in the life of man; but after having passed fifty years in loving companionship - man and wife walking together towards the sunset of life - it is one of those rare instances that calls for more than a passing reference from your friend, the Phonograph.

'The life that has been lived so full of incidents, so rich in experiences of this world, if it could be written out, what a book it would make! How full it would be of rich instances of love, of affection, of sorrow, of grief, of all that ennoble the life of man; in this world its work is that of making (if it is on a high level) everything about us happier and sweeter, and I feel sure that the fact of your having lived so long together is a proof of this - that you have had in your hearts the elements of a long-lived sweetness and trust that lead to victory; and as you near the end of your journey, may you feel as do all those who witness a sunset, that while for a little time darkness may be about in the earth, yet on the other side of the world it is full of glory and light!

'May every blessing attend you to the end, when God shall receive you to Himself'.

I wonder if there are recordings being made today that will sound as sickly in a hundred years from now? Presumably, our old friend Colonel Gouraud was behind this little bit of phonographic enterprise.



PSST.....WANNA BUY A MATRIX?

~~~~~  
Frank Andrews gives some background information in response to George Frow's question (on Page 158, February HILLANDALE) about the circumstances under which some artists associated in Britain with Brunswick later appeared on Columbia.

~~~~~  
Warner Bros. Pictures Inc. had acquired the radio, radio-gramophone and record business of the Brunswicke Balke Collender Co and continued the business as the Brunswick Radio Corporation. By early 1932, Warners had sold the record side to the American Record Corporation, who organised it as the Brunswick Record Corporation. (Warner's Brunswick Radio Corporation continued).

In England, the Crystalate firm had about a one-third interest in the A. R. C., which it had helped to set up in 1929; thus in 1932 Crystalate had an interest in the Brunswick matrices (and the Vocalion matrices which Brunswick owned) by virtue of its holdings in the A. R. C.

Warner Bros. had set up Warner Brunswick Ltd. in England to manufacture and promote Brunswick records, and when it sold out in America, the British end was offered to, and bought by, Decca, who kept the 'Warner Brunswick Ltd.' name in print on the Brunswick records sold here until, early in 1934, this was changed to 'Brunswick Ltd.' (Decca had given this new name to Warner Brunswick Ltd. in June 1933). Now most of the records pressed by Decca with the Brunswick label were from matrices of the former Brunswick Radio Corporation and the later Brunswick Record Corporation, which were sent over from America.

Late in 1934, Decca set up Decca Records Inc. in America. This company began making its own records and the Brunswick Record Corporation's matrices soon ceased to be sent to England for use as Brunswick records here; American Decca matrices came instead.

Once Decca had its own American artists as a source of supply, the Crystalate business here, with its own interests in the A. R. C. / Brunswick/Vocalion matrices, began to issue pressings from some of those matrices on its Rex and its new Vocalion 'Swing', 'Celebrity' and 'Continental' series in 1936. This explains how the former Brunswick artists came to be on Crystalate's labels.

In early 1937, all this matrix material passed into Decca's possession when it purchased the Crystalate business. Thus American Vocalion and Brunswick artists came out on the Rex and Vocalion records pressed by Decca. In late 1938, the Columbia Broadcasting system bought the plant and business of the American Record Corporation, of which both Brunswick/Vocalion and the Columbia Phonograph Corp. were a part. Two new companies were set up, Columbia Recording Corporation and Columbia Records Corporation; these had control of the Brunswick and Vocalion matrices, some copies of which were in England in the Decca factories. Decca now lost all rights to those matrices made between 1931 and 1934.

EMI, apparently, acquired rights in the American Record Corporation's repert-



oire. EMI already had rights in both the Decca companies' matrices for use in South America, Australia, India and other far-eastern countries since 1935, but I have no details of this part of the story. Certainly, Columbia (that is, the Columbia Graphophone Co., part of EMI) had former Brunswick matrices at Hayes, before the end of 1938, and Brunswick artists appeared on the Columbia DB series, a few in 1938, the majority in 1939.

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